



## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720  
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Idaho State Department of Education  
February 16, 2012  
[www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov)

Media contact:  
Melissa McGrath  
(208) 332-6818  
[mrmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:mrmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov)

# STATE BOARD APPROVES IDAHO'S APPLICATION FOR NEW ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

BOISE – The Idaho State Board of Education today voted unanimously to approve Idaho's move toward a new system of increased accountability, which focuses on academic growth.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna and staff at the Idaho State Department of Education worked with educational stakeholders to create a new accountability plan as part of the state's application for more flexibility under No Child Left Behind.

With the State Board's approval, the Department will now submit its application to the U.S. Department of Education before the deadline on February 21.

"Because of the Students Come First laws Idaho passed last year, we are able to create this new, higher level of accountability that gives local school districts the flexibility they need to make sure every student in Idaho is growing academically every year," Superintendent Luna said.

Idaho has taken a lead role in building the next generation of accountability systems. By passing the Students Come First reform laws in 2011, the state has moved toward an education system based on academic growth and better preparing students for the world that awaits them after high school.

Superintendent Luna worked with other states to develop key principles for new accountability systems through his role as President-Elect (and now current President) of the Council of Chief State School Officers. In June, Superintendent Luna sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, informing him that Idaho would begin moving toward a new system of increased accountability since Congress has not reauthorized No Child Left Behind. The new system would include more flexibility for school districts and a new accountability system that measures growth.

Under the current No Child Left Behind law, states only measure school success based on proficiency – or how many students pass the test. The federal law, which originally passed in 2001, was supposed to be reauthorized four years ago so states could include academic growth, or how much progress a student makes in a given year.

While Congress has been considering some pieces of legislation, it has yet to take action on reauthorization.

Superintendent Luna was in Washington, D.C. today testifying before the U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee, encouraging them to act on legislation to reauthorize No Child Left Behind in full. He called into the State Board of Education meeting.

- MORE -



## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**P.O. BOX 83720  
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027**

**TOM LUNA  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

With a waiver to certain parts of the No Child Left Behind law, Idaho is able to create its new system of increased accountability based on higher standards, academic growth, and improved performance evaluations for educators – all key components of the Students Come First reform laws. These laws have positioned Idaho well to implement its new system of increased accountability.

Under the new accountability plan, schools will no longer receive an Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) ranking. Instead, schools will be rated based on a Five-Star scale.

A Five-Star School is performing excellent in key areas – proficiency, academic growth, and postsecondary and career-ready metrics. A One-Star School, on the other hand, is struggling to meet the state's goals in these areas and will receive additional technical assistance from the state.

Representatives of educational stakeholder groups and members of the public helped to shape Idaho's new accountability system. The Department held focus groups with parents, legislators, classroom teachers, principals, superintendent and school board trustees in October. The public could read and comment on a draft of the Idaho's waiver application throughout the month of January.

The Department made about a dozen changes to its application based on this feedback.

Visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/FederalReq/> to read Idaho's new accountability plan in full or to see an executive summary.

#####